

The Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented process operable, when executing on a computer system, to manage a distributed workflow involving a plurality of physically separated enterprises to perform a set of predefined, executable software functions that collectively perform the distributed workflow:

the computer-implemented process operable, when executing on a computer system, to store the set of predefined, executable software functions for the distributed workflow involving the plurality of physically separated enterprises that are to be performed at a plurality of distributed nodes, each of the distributed nodes being associated with a corresponding one of the plurality of physically separated enterprises;

the computer-implemented process operable, when executing on the computer system, to manage the distributed workflow involving the plurality of physically separated enterprises by automatically interacting with the distributed workflow involving the plurality of physically separated enterprises at each of the distributed nodes associated with the plurality of physically separated enterprises to perform the predefined, executable software functions;

the computer-implemented process operable, when executing on the computer system, to communicate a first one or more of the predefined, executable software functions to a first one of the distributed nodes associated with a corresponding first one of the plurality of physically separated enterprises and, in connection with performance of the first one or more predefined, executable software functions at the first one of the distributed nodes, interact with the first one of the distributed nodes associated with the corresponding first one of the plurality of physically separated enterprises through performance of the first one or more predefined, executable software functions at the first one of the distributed nodes; and

the computer-implemented process operable, when executing on the computer system, to communicate a second one or more of the predefined, executable software functions to a second one of the distributed nodes associated with a corresponding second one of the plurality of physically separated enterprises and, in connection with performance of the second one or more predefined, executable software functions at the second one of the distributed nodes, interact with the second one of the distributed nodes associated with the corresponding second one of the plurality of physically separated enterprises through performance of the second one or more predefined, executable software functions at the second one of the distributed nodes, the second one or more predefined, executable software

functions performed at the second one of the distributed nodes using as input a result of the performance of the first one or more predefined, executable software functions at the first one of the distributed nodes.

2. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented process operable, when executing on a computer system, to manage a distributed workflow to perform a set of predefined, executable software functions:

the computer-implemented process operable, when executing on a computer system, to store a set of predefined, executable software functions for a workflow that are to be performed at a plurality of distributed nodes;

the computer-implemented process operable, when executing on a computer system, to manage the workflow by automatically interacting with the workflow at each of the distributed nodes to perform the predefined, executable software functions; and

the set of predefined, executable software functions operable to generate a workflow between a plurality of enterprises.

3. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, wherein the set of predefined, executable software functions are operable to transmit data associated with operation of the distributed workflow involving the plurality of physically separated enterprises at each of the distributed nodes associated with the plurality of physically separated enterprises to a monitoring system.

4. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 1, wherein the set of predefined, executable software functions are operable to deploy the distributed workflow involving the plurality of physically separated enterprises to the distributed nodes associated with the plurality of physically separated enterprises.

5. (Previously Presented) A computer-implemented process for generating a collaboration between a plurality of enterprises, the computer-implemented process operating at least in part external to the enterprises, the computer-implemented process operable, when executing on a computer system, to:

receive at the computer system a preliminary collaboration from a first enterprise;

automatically transmit the preliminary collaboration from the computer-implemented process at the computer system to a predefined second enterprise for review;

receive at the computer system a response to the preliminary collaboration from the second enterprise;

automatically transmit the response of the second enterprise from the computer-implemented process at the computer system to the first enterprise for review; and

receive at the computer system a response to the response of the second enterprise from the first enterprise, the responses of the first and second enterprises ultimately resulting in a final collaboration based on the preliminary collaboration and optimized for the first and second enterprises.

6. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 5, wherein the response of the first enterprise comprises a comment on the preliminary collaboration.

7. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 5, wherein the response of the first enterprise comprises a modification of the preliminary collaboration.

8-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 5, further operable, when executing on a computer system, to;

receive at the computer system an approval from each of the first and second enterprises for a collaboration based on the preliminary collaboration and reflecting the responses of the first and second enterprises;

subsequent to receiving at the computer system the approvals from the first and second enterprises, automatically transmit the collaboration from the computer-implemented process at the computer system to a predefined third enterprise for review;

receive at the computer system a response to the collaboration from the third enterprise;

Y1 automatically transmit the response of the third enterprise from the computer-implemented process at the computer system to the first and second enterprises for review; and

receive at the computer system responses to the response of the third enterprise from the first and second enterprises, the responses of the first, second, and third enterprises ultimately resulting in a final collaboration based on the preliminary collaboration and optimized for the first, second, and third enterprises.

11. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 10, wherein the response of the third enterprise comprises a comment on the collaboration.

12. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 10, wherein the response of the third enterprise comprises a modification to the collaboration.

13-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously Presented) A computer-implemented process for deploying a collaboration generated by a first enterprise to a plurality of other enterprises, the computer-implemented process operating at least in part external to the enterprises, the computer-implemented process operable, when executing on a computer system, to:

receive a final collaboration approved by first, second, and third enterprises;

automatically transmit a predefined first part of the collaboration from the computer-implemented process to a predefined second enterprise for operation at the second enterprise; and

automatically transmit a predefined second part of the collaboration from the computer-implemented process to a predefined third enterprise for operation at the third enterprise.

16. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 15, further operable, when executing on a computer system, to:

request an approval from the second enterprise for operation of the first part of the collaboration at a node of the second enterprise; and

request an approval from the third enterprise for operation of the second part of the collaboration at a node of the third enterprise.

17. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 16, when executing on a computer system, further operable to, in response to receiving the approval from the second enterprise, notify the third enterprise of the approval.

18. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 16, when executing on a computer system, further operable to, in response to receiving the approvals from the second and third enterprises, transmit a signal to the second and third enterprises to operate the first and second parts of the collaboration, respectively.

19. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 16, when executing on a computer system, further operable to, in response to receiving approvals to operate the collaboration from all enterprises to which any part of the collaboration was transmitted, transmit a signal to all of the enterprises to which any part of the collaboration was transmitted to operate the corresponding transmitted parts of the collaboration.

20. (Previously Presented) A computer-implemented process for monitoring a collaboration across a plurality of enterprises, the computer-implemented process operating at least in part external to the enterprises, the computer-implemented process operable, when executing on a computer system, to:

FI receive at the computer system a first predefined set of data associated with operation of a first portion of the collaboration at a first node of a first enterprise, the first set of data having been collected in response to an automatic query of the first node for the first set of data;

automatically transmit the first set of data from the computer-implemented process at the computer system to a monitoring system in response to the querying of the first node;

receive at the computer system a second predefined set of data associated with operation of a second portion of the collaboration at a second node of a second enterprise, the second set of data having been collected in response to an automatic query of the second node for the second set of data; and

automatically transmit the second set of data from the computer-implemented process at the computer system to the monitoring system in response to the querying of the second node.

21-47. (Cancelled)

48. (Currently Amended) A ~~system~~ computer-implemented process for generating a collaboration between a plurality of enterprises, the ~~system~~ computer-implemented process operating at least in part external to the plurality of enterprises, the computer-implemented process comprising:

means for receiving a preliminary collaboration from a first enterprise;

means for automatically transmitting the preliminary collaboration to a predefined second enterprise for review;

FI means for receiving a response to the preliminary collaboration from the second enterprise;

means for automatically transmitting the response of the second enterprise to the first enterprise for review; and

means for receiving a response to the response of the second enterprise from the first enterprise, the responses of the first and second enterprises ultimately resulting in a final collaboration based on the preliminary collaboration and optimized for the first and second enterprises.
